

SANDY HOOK, GATEWAY NRA: LIFE AT AN ARMY FORT

Thomas Minton: Fort Hancock was constructed in the late 1890s through the early 1900s out here at Sandy Hook. Not only were there military personnel out here, but there were also civilian contractors working with the Army, inside the Fort, and at the proving ground, and their families as well.

Maren Morsch: These homes are officers' homes, and they would've been for one married officer and his family. They were finished in 1898 for the turn of the century, which now makes them over 100 years old.

<old picture of officers drilling>

Traditionally, officer homes would face the parade ground, which is behind these homes. However, since we are in such a beautiful location, these homes actually face the Bay.

AL Zwiazek <over old pictures and also see Al talking>: In 1939, there were 600 or 700 people. When the war started, they had thousands here. They built wooden barracks, you know. But we only had these brick buildings that you see around here now. But we never lived here, 'cause the officers lived here.

Maren Morsch: This house is special because this would've been post commander's house. The post commander is the person that's in charge of the entire fort. His home has a little porch on the side where he would watch the soldiers doing their exercises and drills out here on the parade ground just by coming out of his home. The other officers actually had to exit their home and walk behind their houses to see the exhibitions

The interesting thing about these homes is that they are all yellow brick. This is different for a lot of army posts, you don't see it that often. These are all classic high Victorian-style homes, with high tin ceilings and beautiful detail work inside, wainscoting and the whole nine yards.

House #1, on officers row, we have converted and restored to be our history house. We bring the public in on the weekends, and everyone's always amazed at not only the detail and quality of the craftsmanship of the homes, but also the sheer size and what it would be like to live in one of those houses.